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Cavatappi

Cavatappi (Italian: [kava'tappi]; lit. 'corkscrews'), also known as ***spirali***, ***cellentani***, ***amori***, ***fusilli rigati***, or **curly mac**, is macaroni formed in a helical tube shape. Certain areas of the US and Canada may also refer to it as "double elbows"[1] or "scoobi doo" pasta,[4] purportedly because of their resemblance to scoubidou.

It should not be confused with fusilli, which, despite also being commonly referred to as "corkscrew pasta", is a different shape altogether—a flat twist, as opposed to *cavatappi*'s hollow tube shape. *Cavatappi* is usually scored with lines or ridges (*rigati* in Italian) on the surface. It may be yellow in color, like most pastas, or have vegetables or a food coloring added to make it green or red. It can be used in a variety of dishes, including salads, soups, and casseroles.

Cavatappi

Dried *cavatappi*

Alternative names	*Celentani*, *spirali*, *tortiglione*, *serpentini*,[1] *amori*,[2] *torselli*,[3] scoobi doo,[4] double elbows![1]
Type	Pasta
Place of origin	Italy

Media: *Cavatappi*

Etymology

Cavatappi is an Italian word created by compounding *cava* and *tappi*, which literally means 'stopper extractor' (a corkscrew). It is known by many other names.[5]

Origin

Cavatappi is a generic name adopted by other brands that imitated Barilla's *cellentani*. This particular shape was born in the 1970s at Barilla in Parma,[6] when a set of pasta dies had been mistakenly made with a spiral (instead of straight) set of lines. These produced pasta in a spiral or spring (*molla* in Italian) shape. Barilla decided to name it after one of the most famous showpeople of the time, Adriano Celentano, who was nicknamed *Il Molleggiato*. As this name was trademarked by Barilla, other pasta producers had to use other names, such as *cavatappi* (lit. 'corkscrews').

Shape

The *cavatappi* shape is perhaps best described as a ridged tube extruded into a helix shape through a small number of rotations. The number of turns is commonly in the range of one to three (with less than one full turn, the shape degenerates into a twisted version of elbow macaroni).

Cavatappi pasta shape

Common recipes

Cavatappi is used with Italian-style foods, such as *cavatappi all'amatriciana*[7] and *cavatappi al pomodoro*.[8]

See also

- List of pasta

Italy portal
Food portal

References

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5. "Definition of CAVATAPPI" (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cavatappi). *www.merriam-webster.com*. Retrieved 26 August 2026.
6. This story was related to chef Davide Oldani on his TV show *Alle origini della bontà* (24 November 2018) by Italo Bardiani, at the time one of the technicians at Barilla research lab. – http://www.acfans.it/blog/minipost/barilla-da-un-errore-e-nata-la-pasta-cellentani/
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